Children and Youth in Transit:

State Ambivalence, NGO Governance, and Migration Strategies of Unaccompanied Children and Youth in Egypt

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Abstract

Given the current unprecedented mobility, unaccompanied children (UAC) and youth are receiving increased attention as a discursive and administrative category. Perceptions on UAC and youth range from viewing them as innocent vulnerable victims to agents who make life-changing, and life-threatening, decisions. This thesis explores how the refugee governance and assistance landscapes in Egypt relate to the migration decisions and strategies of UAC and youth on the move. Relying on semi-structured interviews, the thesis provides an account of NGO practitioners' perceptions of the UAC and youth situation in Egypt including provided services, persistent challenges, and how they navigate them. Although the main scope is Egypt as an ambivalent host and a transit country, the landscape in Egypt and its government policies cannot be studied in isolation from the global migration apparatus. Building on frameworks of anthropology of policy, non-local ethnography, and the notion of the migration apparatus, policies and practices resulting from the relations between a multiplicity of actors and interactions between disparate policy domains are analysed to complement the study. As their social inclusion in Egypt is hindered by structural barriers, not addressed sustainably by NGOs, and not mitigated by arranged resettlement to third countries, UAC and youth resort to irregular migration to escape a situation of indefinite temporariness in transit. The thesis aims to contribute to understandings of the construction of a UAC and youth governance and assistance landscape and to provide a set of realistic recommendations to improve this landscape.

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Abbreviations

BIA	Best Interest Assessment
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
EU	European Union
GoE	Government of Egypt
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders)
NCCM	National Council for Childhood and Motherhood
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PSTIC	Psycho-social Services and Training Institute in Cairo
RCS	Refugee Community School
RSD	Refugee Status Determination
SCI	Save the Children International
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
StARS	Saint Andrew's Refugee Services
UAC	Unaccompanied Child(ren)
UASC	Unaccompanied and Separated Child(ren)
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

Introduction

Migration and forced displacement are key phenomena of our globalized world. Unprecedentedly, 82.4 million persons are internally and externally forcibly displaced worldwide, 34.4. millions of whom are seeking asylum or refuge outside their home country. Of whom, 86% are hosted in developing countries (UNHCR 2021). Egypt hosts more than 270,000 refugees and asylum-seekers who are registered with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), primarily from Syria, Sudan, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Eritrea (UNHCR 2022). Besides, it hosts an unknown number of undocumented migrants who, altogether with refugees and asylum-seekers, are estimated to be six million (IOM 2021).

Linking the Middle East and North Africa to Europe, Egypt is considered by migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers a transit - a step towards their ultimate destinations in which they might have a better quality of life. Their experiences in transit reinforce their desires to continue their journeys. Unemployment, poverty, and poor quality of education and public services are among the challenges that Egyptians face. Refugees who fled their home countries to transit in Egypt find no reasons to stay. These challenges -exacerbated in their cases as 'others'- are coupled with racism, xenophobia, marginalization, and restrictions on formal employment. Although they live in urban settings, and although the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and different non-governmental organizations (NGOs) provide services that are claimed to be attempts toward 'integration', many barriers persist. The Egyptian Government adopts a policy of ambivalence toward refugees and migrants, leaving all their governance affairs to UNHCR, IOM, and NGOs, resulting in a messy and fragmented apparatus of governance and assistance shaped by disparate policy directions.

Children make up 37% of refugees and asylum-seekers in Egypt. Out of this figure, 4,186 are unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) (UNHCR 2021). Unaccompanied children

(UAC) (also called unaccompanied minors) are children who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so (Kellenberger et al. 2004; Bhabha and Schmidt 2006). UAC and unaccompanied youth (UAC who recently 'aged out') are the focus of this paper as they lie at the intersection of two statuses, minority and alienage (Bhabha 2018).

Based on information gained from my direct contact with refugee children, especially UAC, during my occupation of different positions between 2016 and 2021 in an NGO program providing education assistance for refugees and asylum seekers in Egypt, the majority of refugee UAC in Egypt are Eritrean males. There are also Sudanese, Ethiopian, South Sudanese, and Somali children (males more than females), most of whom are aged 14 to 17.[1]

Unaccompanied young people face the aforementioned challenges without adult support, mostly with an insurmountable language barrier, and the anxiety of fleeing from persecution in their countries of origin and being followed by protection threats in their countries of asylum/ refuge in which they have no opportunities and an unforeseeable future. Actors responsible for the governance and assistance of UAC acknowledge their increased vulnerability. This, however, does not revoke their agency. Based on the principles of refugee protection and child protection, UNHCR and partner NGOs provide a range of services for UAC. The system in place does not comprehensively address the needs and challenges of UAC, does not invest in their existing skills and agency, nor does it create long-term sustainable pathways of incorporation for these children in Egypt given an array of structural barriers. Moreover, once a child turns 18, they suddenly find themselves ineligible for all services they relied on and impeded from moving forward with their lives.

[1] The state does not register and document refugees. Census and RSD are carried out by UNHCR.

To get over this state of limbo (as local integration and voluntary repatriation are unfeasible), UAC and youth impatiently wait for resettlement. Minimal numbers are resettled by UNHCR. In 2020, only 1,353 refugees were resettled from Egypt (UNHCR 2021).

As their hopes are shattered and they remain 'stuck', some UAC and youth practice their agency and make decisions to resort to irregular migration. Smuggling networks especially take advantage of the young, unaccompanied, and easily exploited children. Notwithstanding their increased vulnerability, UAC and youth navigate the structure they are confronted with and make decisions to migrate in search for future pathways that are otherwise blocked.

Accordingly, this thesis aims to answer the question: *How does the refugee governance and assistance landscape in Egypt relate to UAC and youth's migration strategies?* and the sub-questions: *What are the roles that NGOs play in the governance of UAC and youth in Egypt? How does the global refugee and migration apparatus engage with UAC and youth's migration strategies? How can pathways of incorporation be present for UAC and youth in Egypt?*

In answering these questions, the thesis does not focus on one aspect making up the messy and disconnected apparatus of governance and assistance while disregarding others. It rather attempts to provide an overview of different policy domains and practices relating to the Government of Egypt (GoE), NGOs, international conventions, bordering regimes, and the relations between them that make up the apparatus. It analyses how UAC and youth are also parts of the apparatus; how they navigate it and negotiate its restrictions; and how their engagement with it shapes their experiences and trajectories. The following section details how the anthropology of policy, the notion of the migration apparatus, and calls for non-local ethnography serve as the methodological framework for this thesis.

Chapter One reviews adopted directions in literature relating to children on the move, unaccompanied minors, and forced migrants in general, highlighting their engagement with the

migration apparatus. It outlines key discussions including the dichotomies of forced/ voluntary, legal/ illegal, deserving/ undeserving, and victimized children/ agentic youth; refugee crisis discourses; as well as the externalization of border control and migration governance to private actors and NGOs.

Since NGOs play key roles as actors in the governance and assistance landscape in Egypt, and in migration governance in general, Chapter Two conceptually situates them in the migration apparatus (Feldman 2011; 2012). In doing so, it explores locating NGOs within different theories - namely governmentality by Foucault, field theory by Bourdieu, and ideological state apparatus by Althusser.

Chapter Three provides an overview of the apparatus governing UAC and youth in Egypt. Its first section summarizes the GoE's policies related to children, refugees, and migrants. Its second section outlines the lived experiences, persistent challenges, and available services related to refugee UAC and youth in Egypt as seen and understood by NGO practitioners.

Chapter Four focuses on how UAC and youth as the governed or the subjects of policy navigate the messiness of the disconnected apparatus. The first section summarizes their coping mechanisms with their precarious and indefinitely temporary situations as narrated by NGO workers. The second section discusses their migration decisions and strategies as a way out of a protracted situation of immobility and no prospects. The four chapters are followed by concluding comments and recommendations addressing the messiness and fragmentation of the landscape.

Methodology

Framework

The thesis employs a mix of methods guided by the framework of anthropology of policy, the notion of the migration apparatus, and calls for non-local ethnography to understand the disconnected and disparate UAC and youth governance and assistance landscape in Egypt. Anthropology of policy unveils processes of governance, power, and social change (Shore and Wright 2011). Policies are critical tools that shape how governments, corporates, NGOs, etc. govern subjects and spaces. They produce "new social and semantic spaces, new sets of relations, new political subjects, and new webs of meaning" (Shore and Wright 2011, 1) around and within which UAC and youth's lives and realities are structured.

When studying policy, the field of research becomes 'a social and political space articulated through relations of power and systems of governance' (Shore and Wright 2011, 11). Therefore, it is impossible to study such a field only ethnographically; the field of research transcends any geographical site. Instead, Shore and Wright (2011) recommend finding small sites in which the anthropologist can find interactions of larger processes coupled by a critical reading of government policies, international legal instruments, etc.

Feldman (2011) extends on the above by calling for the use of non-local ethnography to study apparatuses. Apparatuses are important spectrums from which anthropologists can understand global processes. They govern social relations across unrelated actors through the mediation of abstract agents rather than concrete social connections. Social connections are tangible, direct, and local. They take place in particular points in time and space. Relations involve the mediation between people through abstract agents who are alienated (disconnected) from each other. The synthesis that the apparatus entails is formed through general policy standards, logics, and norms that diverse actors generate when a policy object becomes involved in their policy

domains. Such synthesis is not localized. It is then more viable to conduct non-local ethnography instead of participant observation to discern social relations.

UAC and youth's movement across space is shaped and regulated by such synthesis and the way they engage with the apparatus makes them a part of it. Egyptian government policies, host community practices, prevalent discourses on refugees and migrants, UNHCR and NGOs' frameworks and operations, European bordering regimes, smuggling networks, and migration strategies are some of the disconnected yet related elements in the refugees and migrants' apparatus. As Feldman (2011, 390) emphasizes, "the apparatus is not centralized, closed, or immutable. It dynamically responds to the creative choices of migrants themselves." It does not control them. It rather interacts with them while they cross different territorial boundaries and legal statuses.

Similarly, Shore and Wright (2011) stress that policy should not be conceptualised as a merely top-down process made by decision-makers then imposed on the people. The implied passivity of the people on whom policy was imposed should be replaced by an understanding of how they engage with policy and what do they make out of it. 'A policy's interpretive community' consists of not only the governors but also the governed who have an active role, besides the technologies that link them. Therefore, this thesis highlights the agency of UAC and youth within the present structural barriers, and their mechanisms and migration strategies used to navigate a restrictive migration apparatus.

Method

Building on the above, a non-local ethnography is conducted to write this thesis using different methods. First, the paper features an analysis of the policies and practices of governance and assistance actors in Egypt (GoE and NGOs), in relation to actors and policies in the wider migration apparatus.

Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight participants who currently work or have worked in the following NGOs and UN agencies: Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Medicines sans Frontier (MSF), Psycho-Social Services and Training Institute in Cairo (PSTIC), Save the Children International (SCI), IOM and UNHCR. All participants work or have worked in projects directly engaging with UAC. Their backgrounds vary as they work in different sectors including child protection, case management, counter-trafficking, education, housing, mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS), sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and refugee status determination (RSD). All research participants have worked with UAC for between four to seven years, which makes them well-aware and engaged with issues related to UAC and youth, and able to provide insiders' critique of the services they deliver and the governance and assistance apparatus they constitute a part of. These are still, however, constrained to some extent by their ways of seeing and knowing as a result of their embeddedness in how NGOs operate.

Participants share similar demographics. Seven out of eight participants are Egyptian, and one is Eritrean. Their ages range from 25 to 30. Six out of eight of them are females, representing the gender ratio of practitioners in the field in Egypt (see Mayer 2018 on similar gender ratio in Germany). Almost all of them have social sciences undergraduate degrees (mostly political science) and some are currently pursuing graduate degrees.

I interviewed seven practitioners in entry and mid-level positions who are closer to field implementation; have direct contact with UAC and youth; and are aware of their situations to the extent of their scope of interaction. I also interviewed one manager who could provide a more strategic outlook on the design of refugee aid as well as donor-NGO power dynamics, as she combines both strategic planning and contact with donors as well as decision-making power in organizational processes and implementation (Krause 2014).

My interview questions are divided into three main sections. The first includes a set of general questions on the participant's work experience with UAC. The second tackles refugee UAC and youth's experiences and challenges; accessibility to governmental and non-governmental services; sustainable pathways of incorporation in Egypt; and factors relating to their migration strategies. The third addresses frameworks of aid programs targeting refugee UAC and youth in Egypt as well as donors' requirements, interests, and influence.

To ensure the comfort and confidentiality of my participants, their names and job titles are not mentioned in the thesis. However, the NGOs in which they work, their job levels, and sectors are stated to contextualize their input. Upon receiving the participants' verbal consent, the interviews were recorded for transcription and analysis.

Positionality

Interviewing co-workers and friends smoothed the interviewing process. Although there were no age or gender specificities of the targeted interviewees, most practitioners in such positions are females in their 20s and 30s. The demographic and experiential commonalities between the interviewees and myself, besides the existing rapport, facilitated the interviewing process (Vasquez-Tokos 2017). Further, sharing the same work experience entails ease of communication and understanding of the languages they use. As Krause (2014) argues, as workers in the same field we shared a set of 'taken-for-granteds' or doxa.

Being immersed in the field programs one to think in terms of goals, objectives, and implementation details, limiting one's strategic critical outlook on the taken for granted knowledge and practices. One's focus becomes consumed by processes of project design; needs assessments that are limited to the scope of our potential project in line with donors' funding interests or humanitarian implementation plans; implementation of project activities and interventions; and reporting which involves measuring quantitative indicators. Moving from practice to academia,

even if temporarily, allowed me to take a step back and look from a wider perspective on the governance and assistance landscapes of UAC and youth, and the migration apparatus as a whole. As Shore and Wright (2011) put it, I had a sympathetic insider's view of their beliefs, policy worlds, and practices. Yet simultaneously, I am now at a distance to allow for critically questioning their normalities.

No interviews or other ethnographic methods were conducted with UAC and youth for safeguarding considerations. The fact that all my interactions with UAC and youth were through my previous work ethically prohibits me from contacting NGO project participants/ 'beneficiaries' for personal purposes. Besides, UAC and youth often have protection concerns which would make them uncomfortable participating in ethnographic research or sharing personal information. In addition, I cannot receive informed consent from UAC since they have no legal guardians to give consent on their behalf.

Chapter One: Children and Youth on the Move – Literature Review

1.1 Implications of a 'Crisis' Discourse

Unaccompanied minors were first legally attended to in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which explicitly states host countries' obligation to protect UAC's best interests until they pass the age of legal adulthood (Lems et al. 2020). The term 'unaccompanied minor' first appeared in 2000 in a European Parliament study on asylum practices and children's rights. The Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on UASC was developed in 2004 (Kellenberger et al. 2004). Its principles are rooted in humanitarian and refugee law, aiming to promote principles on child protection, family unity, and the best interest of the child at policy and field levels. By 2008, unaccompanied minor as a legal and humanitarian category started to crystallize in EU policy discourse, and Eurostat made its first data collection on unaccompanied asylum seekers in the EU. In 2011, the first comprehensive European study was published, outlining protection measures and standards of receiving and supervising unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors (Lems et al. 2020).

Although these events mark the beginning of traction for UAC in legal and policy realms, independent child migration is a much older phenomenon (Lems et al. 2020). Autonomous child migration to Germany began in the 1970s, and to other EU member states in the 1990s (Kanics et al. 2010). Most states treated children on the move with a fragmented framework torn between the contradictions of the migration governance framework and local or national child protection principles, with the first often taking over the latter (Kanics et al. 2010; Bhabha 2018). Bhabha (2004) highlights two main reasons for the increased attention given to UASC at the time. The first involves the dramatic escalation in the numbers of UASC seeking asylum. The second involves their constitution of a political issue due to the increased concern towards child trafficking.

2015 marks the entry of the category of UAC into the media and public discourses within the context of the so-called refugee 'crisis' in Europe. Refugee UAC came to represent the innocent human face of the refugee 'crisis' (Lems et al. 2020). The presence of substantial groups of unaccompanied young asylum seekers from countries witnessing mass displacements such as Afghanistan, Syria, Eritrea, or Somalia as well as the increased attention they got in media and policy contributed to UAC's entry into the public realm. Therefore, the emergence of the UAC figure is linked to the narrative of the refugee 'crisis' in Europe (Lems et al. 2020).

The continuous discussion of the 'crisis' starting 2015 altered its meaning from "crisis as the cause of forced migration to the construction of crisis as an effect of human mobility" (Lems et al. 2020, 8). Ramsay (2019) advocates against viewing displacement as a "crisis", as an exceptional occurrence, but rather as a feature of the contemporary world and as temporal dispossessions in the context of global capitalism and neoliberal restructuring.

In addition, 'crisis' discourses reinforced the provision of emergency aid instead of durable responses although it is advocated that refugee issues should be treated within a larger long-term development framework aimed at the host country aggregately instead of being treated within short-term relief aid programs (Malkki 1995). The contemporary framework of humanitarian assistance for refugees, founded on the three durable solutions (local integration, resettlement, and voluntary repatriation), is often criticized for failing to provide sustainable solutions and rather providing temporary emergency aid (Triandafyllidou 2016).

1.2 Categorical Binaries and Essentialization

Contrary to the view that refugees constitute a distinct social type (Kunz 1973), this thesis stands with the view that there is no 'proto-refugee'. Not all refugees go through the same stages and have the same experiences and psychological traumas. How can two broad categories of forcibly displaced persons in Egypt such as, for instance, Iraqi retired men and unaccompanied

Eritrean female children be essentialized? They have completely different experiences. Not only that their histories are different, but also their present, migration strategies, and most likely their future. There certainly are disparities in the economic and educational backgrounds of the two categories, their journeys to, and their experiences in the host country. They are subjected to different degrees of racism. They are situated in different urban settings thanks to their financial differences. Their genders entail different susceptibility to SGBV. Their ages entail different levels/ types of vulnerabilities. Their languages influence their access to services. The generalizations made here -for the sake of comparison- about each of the two categories can be in themselves problematic as they essentialize the experiences of the members of each category, which is again, subject to individual historical, social, economic, and political backgrounds and histories.

In legal literature, a refugee is someone forced to flee persecution, whereas a migrant is someone whose movement is voluntary (Malkki 1995; Karatani 2005; Zetter 2018). However, not only that the distinction between refugees and migrants is often blurred, the scarcity of 'regular' migration routes, border control, and restrictive migration policies of rich countries also blur the distinction between the regular/ irregular migration binary. Such restrictions have several other consequences including the increase of internally displaced persons and refugees in the surrounding -often developing- countries. In addition, people-smuggling and the whole trafficking industry expands as a "new migration industry" (Castles 2003).

Poverty and economic instability often in the context of political turmoil, human rights violations, and persecution make it challenging to distinguish between refugees and migrants, since one person's movement in such conditions will be motivated by both the political and economic conditions (Schuster 2016). Globalization's system of inclusion and exclusion, increasing inequality and widening the North-South divide, can lead to failed economies, which often cause weak states, corrupt ruling elites, and human rights violations, therefore complicating the reasons for people's migration and blurring the forced/voluntary or refugee/migrant binaries (Castles 2003).

Delineations of these binaries produced labels and categories such as 'refugee', 'migrant', and 'UAC'. These categories cannot capture the complexities of the realities of people on the move. People cannot simply fit into one of these categories in some form of neutral ordering. The paradoxes in the category of unaccompanied minor highlights the importance of looking beyond labels and categorizations. This does not entail creating new categories and preserving the 'categorical fetishism' (Lems et al. 2020). Instead, it entails showing how these labels are lived and negotiated in everyday life. Therefore, the ambiguous category of UAC should be understood based on the politically produced ambiguities surrounding the refugee figure such as forced/ voluntary, deserving/ undeserving, self/ other, belonging/ non-belonging, and inclusion/ exclusion.

Since child migration should be viewed as a combination of choice and compulsion, and the diversity of its situations should be acknowledged, the term 'children on the move' emerged to encompass the existing labels and categorizations. Its downturn, however, is obscuring the post-settlement challenges (Abel and Bhabha 2019).

1.3 Between Agency and Victimhood

Policy and advocacy discourses contributing to the formation of the category of UAC rely on depicting them as innocent, traumatized, vulnerable figures. These depictions and the child-saving ideas they yield leave no room for children's agency and active decision-making. They are instead deemed as passive victims of a world run by adults. These depictions also situate children on the move in ahistorical and apolitical spheres, flattening their complex political biographies (Lems et al. 2020).

While their migration journeys demonstrate agency and autonomy, once they are labelled UAC, they are prompted to stick to their characterizations as passive victims, which disempowers them and limits their resilience in the host country (Lems et al. 2020; Wernesjö 2020). The right

to stay and eligibility for services often rely on the demonstration of vulnerability and victimhood, forcing children to make 'strategic performances' in front of social workers to fulfil criteria of deservingness (Lems et al. 2020). In fact, the RSD and resettlement processes run by UNHCR Egypt prompt children to show the utmost persecution[2], vulnerability and trauma they can, or else they wouldn't qualify for the refugee status nor for resettlement. Further, given the delayed registration of newly arrived asylum seekers upon the outbreak of COVID-19, NGOs refer unregistered unaccompanied children to UNHCR for fast-tracking registration interviews. To secure nearer registration dates for the children, NGOs have to milk the child's vulnerabilities to UNHCR.

Paradoxically, UAC are able to exercise a degree of agency in restrictive asylum systems through their performances of victimhood. The term 'victimcy' was coined to reconcile the opposition between victimhood and agency. Therefore, UAC and youth do not passively surrender to labels imposed on them. They, instead, make use of them for their own benefit, blurring the line between agency and victimhood (Lems et al. 2020).

Belloni (2020) highlights the agency of Eritrean children in their decisions to migrate. Contrary to literature explaining their migration unaccompanied as a family plan, many children migrate without informing their families to prevent them from worrying and from taking responsibility if something bad happened to them en route. Therefore, she criticizes the crisis figure of the UAC, which depicts them as either passive victims or imposters. Instead, the complexity of structural barriers, social pressures, and personal motivations which lead to migration to safer countries should be considered.

[2] This includes young people's emphasis on the persecution and hardships they fled back home, the protection threats they face in Egypt, the trauma and mental health challenges resulting from these hardships, and their helplessness towards them.

Abel and Bhabha (2019) emphasize that the participation, agency, and resilience of children on the move should be attended to as much as their vulnerability and protection. They should be integrated into local education and child protection services. Moreover, dedicated measures should be tailored for UASC.

1.4 Youth - Securitized, Racialized, and Criminalized

The popular narrative of the innocent vulnerable UAC which emerged in 2015 in Europe shifted into its extreme opposite. Narratives about adults faking their ages and identities to receive the services extended to children, coupled with dominant narratives criminalizing migrant youth, disseminated. These paradoxical discourses on UAC were formed by narratives on innocence, victimhood, and deservingness of children alongside narratives on problematic masculinity, the pathology of youth and their threat to the European social and cultural values (Lems et al. 2020).

There is a prevalent gap in policy and practice related to the protection and support in the transition to adulthood, impacting youth's mental health and wellbeing (Abel and Bhabha 2019). While those who fall in the category of UAC receive protection and benefits in accordance with their perceived deservingness, youth who do not fit into this category for any reason are treated in the extreme opposite way, being faced with narratives of undeservingness, problematization, and danger, or even being subject to deportation (Lems et al. 2020; Wernesjö 2020).

The problematization of 'aged-out' youth unfit for the UAC category should be understood against the historical backdrop of the criminalization and securitization of refugees. In the post-World War II period that witnessed unprecedented displacement, refugees were viewed as a military problem, contained in refugee camps that resemble military or concentration camps - instruments of containment and control. Shortly, upon the anticipation of a 'refugee problem', refugees became seen as administrative and humanitarian issues (Malkki 1995). Yet, the view that refugees constitute a security threat never ceased to exist.

UAC are found at the overlap of two statuses -aliens and minors (Bhabha 2018). When they lose the status of minority, they become merely aliens. Aliens -especially non-white dispossessed migrants- are often viewed as foreign criminals; treated with 'xeno-racism', hyper-sexualized, and seen as scroungers, encouraging discourses that justify deportation and exclusion (Fekete 2018).

Even when dealing with minors, there is a continuous tension between migration governance and child protection principles. The restrictive migration climate analysed by Bhabha (2016) can deny forcibly displaced children the protection they deserve. UAC detention and deportation, a result of brutal border enforcement policies in Europe, are issues of growing concern. These externalized and outsourced processes lack implementation of the best interest of the child, an already ambiguous principle (Abel and Bhabha 2019).

On the externalization of border control, Fekete (2018) explains that European states no longer monopolize force. Violence -as well as processing and care for asylum seekers and migrants- was outsourced to private security systems created by Europe for refugees and 'enemy aliens'. This is to limit and categorize those from the Global South as deserving or undeserving of access to Europe.

Similarly, in his illustration of an individual's migration journey, Feldman (2011) presents an account of actors dedicated to controlling the European borders situated from central Africa to the Mediterranean, and that migrant's engagement with them. These actors include I-MAP, an interactive map that presents migration information from Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa jointly created by Europol, Frontex, and European Migration Policy Organization; EU-funded information centres in African cities; satellite surveillance systems; police officers; and detention centres (Feldman 2011). Such strict migration control leads to the increased activity of smuggling and trafficking which become the only exit strategies for UAC and youth.

1.5 Africa, Home of Children on the Move

Bakewell (2016) explains how Africa has witnessed huge flows of South-South migration and forced displacement. Over the last two decades, violent political upheavals caused increased mobility from states in the east and the horn of Africa. Big cities in Africa with -supposed- relatively better livelihoods (e.g. Cairo, Nairobi, Johannesburg) attract African migrants, who often see such moves as a step closer towards their final destinations -Europe and North America. Such moves are described as transit migration and occur frequently from Sub-Saharan Africa to North Africa (Bakewell 2016), either leading to eventually reaching the dream destination or being "stuck" in transit, the situation of most African refugees including UAC and youth in Egypt.

Africa includes the highest rate of child migrants. 30% of African children are migrants, as compared to less than 10% in Europe and North America. Statistics reveal that child migration is on the rise. There are discrepancies between regions in terms of the proportions of child migrants, resembling other elements of inequality between regions. UNICEF reported in 2016 that currently 1 in 25 children globally are on the move; 1 in 5 children in Africa (Abel and Bhabha 2019).

Eritrean children are raised in the context of protracted crisis in which migration is the only way out of the socio-economic and generational immobility and militarization of society (Belloni 2020). Most families, however, implicitly encourage migration as the only future pathway. The steps that follow in their journey towards Europe are actively chosen and pushed by UAC. The context of protracted crisis is a backdrop for UAC migration not only those from Eritrea. Eritrea is one of many African countries where youth find themselves with no future prospects (Belloni 2020). In general, there is still minimal attention paid to experiences and challenges in the global South, reflected by minimal literature on the issue (Bhabha 2018).

1.6 Challenges Facing Children and Youth on the Move

Abel and Bhabha (2019) highlight key challenges faced by children on the move. They include exploitation and abuse, detention and its effects, family separation and its effects, insufficient access to healthcare and education, discrimination, and lack of attention to drivers of children's migration. In addition, they highlight the lack of regular pathways of mobility, a restrictive migration framework contributing to unsafe migration, the stigma surrounding undocumented child migrants, unguaranteed commitment to child protection measures in refugee camps or shelters, and inadequate access to legal guardianship and representation.

Since almost all regular migration pathways and opportunities cater for adults, it follows that children and adolescents are much more susceptible to abuse and exploitation when they migrate than adults (Bhabha 2018). They are more likely to be involved in journeys that jeopardize their safety and rights. A child's self-initiated migration strategy can involve building relationships with adults who facilitate movement across borders in exchange for services or engaging in exploitative labour and sex trafficking to generate income to pay for migration (Abel and Bhabha 2019).

The mounting attention given to UAC, issues of child trafficking and exploitation, and migration and forced displacement in a general sense, coupled with the privatization of migration governance especially in developing countries, make NGOs pivotal actors in UAC governance and assistance landscapes, and result in the expansion of projects targeting them.

Chapter Two: NGOs in the Migration Apparatus

NGOs have been delegated key roles in migration governance and aid, attracting donors for both development aid and humanitarian assistance. In Egypt, the job market for NGOs working in refugee assistance has expanded over the past several years given the doubling of the number of refugees in Egypt in 2013 and its increase from then onwards (UNHCR 2022), and in turn the increase of funds and projects targeting them. With migration and refugee as well as UAC issues gaining traction globally, all NGO practitioners interviewed expressed their motivation to 'help people', especially refugees and migrants whom they described as 'people in need', 'underprivileged', or 'underrepresented'. In addition, as mostly political science graduates, those who do wish to pursue an academic career or work in a government agency find NGOs a viable alternative. As for working with UAC specifically, participants expressed a diversity of motivating factors, including UAC's appreciation of NGO workers' efforts; finding no dedicated assistance for UAC although their vulnerabilities and needs are very particular; and adopting a work approach that builds on their capacity as agentic active decision-makers instead against the dominant view that they are merely vulnerable children.

NGOs spark debate among social scientists regarding their intentions and impact. Some scholars view them as agents of resistance whereas others argue that they are servants of neoliberal governance (Fisher 1997; Sending and Neumann 2006; Krause 2014). Governance involves the technical issues relating to modes, instruments, procedures, plurality of actors, and their forms of cooperation to order a population. Governmentality, coined by Foucault, involves the general problematic of ruling and the generation of subjectivities (Amos 2010). This chapter discusses the theoretical position of NGOs in the migration apparatus and explores how notions of governmentality, field, and state apparatus can help conceptualize them.

2.1 Civil Society and the Art of Government

Foucault defines the government as 'the conduct of conduct', an activity that aims to configure or affect the conduct of people (Gordon 1991). The government instrumentalizes a range of multiform tactics, not merely laws, to ensure the population's obedience and submission to sovereignty. A key characteristic of the government is its totalization and individualization. The population that the government aims to manage refers not simply to 'people' but to phenomena and variables, such as asylum applications and migration statistics. Managing a population does not only have to do with the collective mass of phenomena and aggregate effects but also depths and details. The government thus becomes 'of all and of each' (Foucault 1991).

Exercising such totalizing and individualizing power over people's actions and conduct entails a presumption of individual freedom and agency. "To govern individuals is to get them to act and to align their particular wills with ends imposed on them through constraining and facilitating models of possible actions. Government presupposes and requires the activity and freedom of the governed." (Burchell 1991, 119).

Foucault's definition of power as 'actions on others' actions' presupposes rather than revokes agency. Therefore, power is an ongoing strategic game that acts through and upon a set of ethical and practical possibilities. Rooted in the power relationship is an agonism, permanent provocation and negotiation rather than a face-to-face confrontation (Burchell 1991).

Governmentality as a theory has an affinity to liberalism and thus holds individuals' free will as the key theme of political life. Governmentality analyses how that 'free' will is shaped. Foucault's ideas on civil society are rooted in liberalism as a context and in the importance it gives to individual freedom (Burchell 1991; Gordon 1991). Liberalism undertakes the creation of a complex sphere of governmentality in which juridical and economic subjectivity are parts of a

more encompassing element, an immanent characteristic of the liberal theory of civil society (Gordon 1991).

Foucault emphasizes the importance of conceptualizing civil society as an instrument of a technology of government rather than a contestant of its will (Gordon 1991). Neoliberal government involves increasing interdependence between political security and social security, creating a 'society of security' (Gordon 1991, 35). The rationality of security is infinite; it not only deals with defined circles of control but also with probabilities and possibilities. It is delusional to view the social as the state's antagonist or victim. The social should be instead envisaged as a field of governmental security (Gordon 1991).

This relativization of the boundary between state and society entails modes of pluralization of the modern government, creating a 'multiple regime of governmentality' (Gordon 1991, 36). Examples of these processes include the delegation of government tasks (such as social services and border control) to NGOs, private organizations, and individuals. Therefore, many institutions of governance are positioned outside the state apparatus.

2.2 NGOs as a Field – between Governance and Resistance

Fisher (1997) and Krause (2014) highlight two salient opposing views on global civil society and, in turn, on NGOs and humanitarian agencies. The first echoes Foucault's stance on civil society. It deems NGOs and humanitarian agencies as tools of donor governments or as agents of false charity that reproduce the dominant dynamics of security and asymmetry. The second views NGOs and humanitarian agencies as benevolent agents that implement their stated values, resist political inequalities, and empower the people.

Krause (2014), taking a different direction from the Foucauldian view on civil society as a technology of governance, argues that each of these two extreme approaches hinders the study of

NGOs' practice, which represents the translation of the combination of interests and stated values. The practical logic of NGOs mediates between human needs, donor interests, articulated values, and implementation on the ground, besides position-takings and reactions in relation to other actors in the field.

Krause (2014) looks at humanitarian relief NGOs through Bourdieu's field theory. She argues that NGOs constitute a field, a differentiated society, that shares a certain logic and produces common practices. The shared practices include project management and the production of projects for a market in which donors are consumers, projects are commodities, and potential beneficiaries compete to become a part of the commodities.

Bourdieu emphasizes the relationality of fields. Relations are not equivalent to interactions between agents or links between individuals. They are rather objective relations that take place independently of individual consciousness and will. A field, therefore, does not have a positivistic definite meaning in isolation from the theoretical system and the system of relations it inhabits (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

As fields are marked by historicity, and historicity entails struggle (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), Krause (2014) highlights three stages crucial to the history of the humanitarian field. The first is marked by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)'s practice of modern humanitarianism. The second by MSF's challenge to ICRC's dominant position and the emergence of different actors, opening up a field of positions. The third began in the 1980s with the expansion of the field and the multiplication of NGOs.

The state of relations of force between players in a field defines its structure. A player's volume and structure of capital determine the player's relative force, position, and strategic orientation in the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). It thus follows that NGOs' policy positions

are developed in response to dilemmas on the ground as well as in reaction to other NGOs' stances within a field (Krause 2014).

Notions of capital and field are highly intertwined. The value of different species of capital (economic, social, cultural, and symbolic) varies according to each field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Humanitarian agencies position themselves toward each other in the market of 'good' projects, in which humanitarian aid is shaped more by competition for symbolic capital (humanitarian authority) than by competition for funding and economic capital. When pursuing good projects that add value, they build on their existing capital which is resources, access, and experience. This results in a dynamic different from humanitarian values, people's needs on the ground, and donor interests (Krause 2014).

Participants in a field strive to differentiate themselves from their competitors to minimize rivalry and monopolize a specific subsector of the field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Agencies' content and criteria for what constitutes a 'good' project is determined by the conditions that need to be fulfilled by an agency to keep operating in a field, which is in turn determined by symbolic differentiation. Therefore, the symbolic differentiation these agencies and their projects create makes the market they are parts of a field (Krause 2014).

Often when participants in a field want to achieve a social function other than the one assigned to them by the field (e.g. having a political stance instead of merely providing basic depoliticized humanitarian aid), they get to know the limits of their autonomy (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Krause (2014) finds NGOs only relatively autonomous; pressured by their donors to achieve measurable results therefore prompted to opt for easy unchallenging projects.

Some literature on NGOs views them as ultimately 'doing good' (Fisher 1997). Their labelling as 'nonprofit' and 'nongovernmental' entails that they seek no economic or political interests and are therefore idealized and depoliticized. However, in terms of governmentality,

NGOs' being nongovernmental does not consequently mean that they are not contributing to the art of government. Governmentality is not merely the task of the government or the state apparatus. In terms of field theory, NGOs are not disinterested actors. The field which they inhabit is a field of struggle for symbolic differentiation and accumulation of capital (Krause 2014).

2.3 NGOs in the Migration Apparatus, and Migrants as Agents

The question of whether NGOs should be conceptualized as instruments of governance or contestants of its will remains open. NGOs have a key role in the governance UAC and youth in Egypt. Krause (2014) would situate NGOs that primarily work with children on the move as a subfield of the whole field of NGOs. Each subfield cannot be studied in isolation but in relation to the whole field (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Feldman (2011; 2012), on the other hand, would situate them within the 'migration apparatus'.

To start on a general note, Althusser's notion of state apparatus is rooted in class power and the reproduction of capitalism. He builds on Marx's division of infrastructure and superstructure. He asserts that "every social formation must reproduce the conditions of its production at the same time as it produces, and in order to be able to produce. It must therefore reproduce: 1. The productive forces, 2. The existing relations of production." (Althusser 1972, 128)

Althusser (1972) describes the state apparatus as the ensemble of institutions that enforce laws such as the court, the police, and the prison; the army as a repressive force; and the head of state, the government, and the bureaucratic institutions. The state apparatus is the state itself and carries out its basic function – the use of force and repression in the interest of the ruling class, hence termed the repressive state apparatus (RSA).

His notion 'ideological state apparatus' (ISA) stems from his conviction of the strength of ideology. Unlike the homogenized and centralized RSA, the ISA is heterogeneous and scattered. It accesses the private domains. Whereas the RSA relies primarily on violence to function, the ISA relies on ideology. Examples of ISA include schools, religious institutions, and the family. These apparatuses seem diverse and disconnected yet are unified by a common ideology. They reproduce the existing social formation (Althusser 1972).

Bourdieu finds the notion of apparatus an embodiment of pessimistic functionalism and conspiracy theory in which everything is moved according to evil will (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). An apparatus for Bourdieu is an extreme pathological case of a field, not likely to happen even in the most repressive regimes. There is no history when there is no resistance and revolt. Therefore, the main difference between a field and an apparatus is the latter's lack of struggle thus historicity (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992).

Feldman, however, follows Bourdieu's stance on relationality. Relations for Bourdieu do not mean direct interactions or links between agents. Instead, relations take place independently of the individual consciousness and will (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). In his work on the migration apparatus, Feldman (2011; 2012) emphasizes that apparatuses entail increasingly mediated social relations -rather than connections- between actors embedded in the same processes yet alienated and disconnected from each other. The migration apparatus is a result of the situated practices of officials, technocrats, and experts who often work individually and do not know each other (Feldman 2011; 2012).

Similar to Althusser's conceptualization that ideology unifies the unconnected actors within ISA, Feldman (2011; 2012) asserts that policy experts, policy targets, and the apparatus involved with them are all integrated into a common ethnical frame, what is claimed to be "a migration policy that works for everyone" (Feldman 2012, xi). The synthesis within an apparatus

does not emerge out of easily traceable causes and effects but out of heterogeneous ubiquitous logics, discourses, policies, and bureaucratic practices. This synthesis is intangible and not localized. Non-local ethnography thus allows for moving across spheres to understand an apparatus's embeddedness in and synthesis of disparate domains (Feldman 2011; 2012).

The synthesis formed within an apparatus orders and regulates the (im)mobility of UAC and youth. Their navigation of the apparatus makes them a part of it. NGOs, policies, host community practices, prevalent discourses, bordering regimes, smuggling networks, and migration strategies are some of the dispersed and disconnected yet related elements in the migration apparatus.

2.4 Conclusion

NGOs constitute a field in Krause's (2014) Bourdieusian study. They are actors in Feldman's (2011; 2012) migration apparatus. If seen through Althusser's (1972) lens, they are not a component of the RSA, yet they are an ISA, serving to govern migrants and maintain the status quo since governance is not monopolized by the state or the government as a centralized homogenized macro-agent (Foucault 1991). ISA follows the idea that governmentality involves power that can shape individual will, 'soul of the citizen', and life-conduct (Gordon 1991) to become a useful labour force, and an obedient member of the existing relations of production. This situates NGOs that deal with children on the move in a field of governmental security (Gordon 1991), or an apparatus unified by the common ideology or goal of maintaining the existing power relations and reinforcing the existing restrictive migration framework, temporariness, and precarity. This expresses the changing rationality of government towards more horizontal modes of governing (Sending and Neumann 2006). Further, NGOs strive for symbolic capital to exercise their authority (Krause 2014). Their strong relationships to governments and donors, that would not be attainable in case of resisting their authority and working against their

interests, entail both social and economic capital that would preserve or enhance their positions in the field.

Chapter Three: A Messy and Disconnected Apparatus

This chapter discusses the apparatus governing UAC and youth in Egypt. Relying primarily on existing literature, the first section outlines the GoE's policies related to children, refugees, and migrants. The second section overviews NGO workers' accounts of the lived experiences, persistent challenges, and available services related to refugee UAC and youth in Egypt.

3.1 GoE's Ambivalent Policies and Their Worlds

"When it comes to refugees … the Egyptian government thinks that everybody who gets the refugee status will be eventually resettled and become someone else's problem. So they don't welcome integration that much." – research participant

The GoE's policies toward refugees and migrants were described by ambivalence or indifference (Norman 2018). This indifference is deemed an ideal strategy for states if NGOs provide basic services and if migration is not politicized thus does not gain the attention of the media and the host community, two conditions fulfilled in the Egyptian context. Egypt has adopted this strategy until 2013 which marked the start of increasing repression and securitization that included refugees and migrants (Norman 2018). Yet, apart from the increasing policing, random ID and residence permit checks, and detention, the GoE still turns a blind eye to the rest of the issues, leaving UNHCR to handle all refugee-related matters and only responds to advocacy by UNHCR in a few cases such as the inclusion of refugees in public healthcare.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNHCR and the GoE signed in 1954 outlines both parties' roles and responsibilities (Sharafeldin 2020). As per the MoU, UNHCR is responsible for: cooperating with the GoE regarding refugee census and identification according to the convention; facilitating voluntary repatriation; encouraging initiatives leading to resettlement; and helping the most destitute refugees residing in Egypt (Sharafeldin 2020). There

is no mention of local integration as a durable solution for refugees in Egypt. Likewise, UNHCR Egypt's webpage on durable solutions[3] only mentions repatriation as the ultimately desirable solution, and resettlement as an alternative for people unable to return.

In 1981, Egypt ratified the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 protocol with several reservations, none of which pertained to local integration. The reservations were on five articles relating to personal status' government by the law of the country of domicile, rationing, access to primary education, public relief and assistance, and labour legislation and social security. The government's justifications for these reservations are to subject refugees to the Egyptian civil law on the one hand, and to differentiate between nationals and foreigners in terms of privileges on the other. Privileges would be, however, granted to refugees on a case-by-case and nationality-specific basis. This is often based on reciprocity as Sharafeldin (2020) and one participant clarify. It is also based on bilateral agreements such as those with Sudan and Libya. There is no comprehensive law that governs all aspects relating to refugees and asylum-seekers in Egypt. Many ad-hoc ministerial and presidential decrees are issued exceptionally in certain circumstances (Sharafeldin 2020).

Egypt ratified the Organization of African Unity's Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969) which addresses aspects of refugee issues particular to Africa, and expands on the 1951 convention's definition of a refugee to include "every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part [or] the whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in nationality" (Sharafeldin 2020, 29).

[3] https://www.unhcr.org/eg/what-we-do/main-activities/durable-solutions?fbclid=IwAR39ygj-RHXwBl7UAU2PjuoUjk-774b9Z5G-4BIi4E5aIskjqC42EzBNBHI

However, UNHCR which governs refugees in Egypt, and the resettlement countries, only operate using the 1951 convention's criteria for refugee which is limited to persecution.

Following that UNHCR thus performs a 'state substitution role' (Sharafeldin 2020), the GoE does not have specific laws nor interventions for refugee UAC and youth or refugee children in general. In theory, the GoE ratified the CRC and all its protocols and amended the Egyptian Child Law to ensure consistency with the CRC. The CRC acknowledges that UASC face greater risks than other children including abuse, exploitation, detention, and absence of food, shelter, education, and health services. Further, it asserts that the obligations of states extend to all children within its borders, including asylum-seekers, refugees, and migrants, regardless of their nationality or statelessness. Children deprived of family environment should receive special protection and assistance by the state. Ideally, states should ensure training their officials on these measures and guarantee their enforcement without discrimination. The child's best interest is the guiding principle that should animate all actions related to children while taking into consideration culture, language, nationality, particular vulnerabilities, and needs (IOM 2016).

In practice, none of the research participants encountered particular government services in this regard except for the recent intervention of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) in a protection case of an accompanied refugee child, which one participant encountered. She explains that the NCCM recently started cooperating with UNHCR and receiving capacity-building training related to children on the move. They still however do not have services tailored to the specific circumstances of UAC nor refugee and migrant children in general.

The Egyptian government policies should not be seen in isolation from the wider policy worlds that largely shape the migration apparatus. Refugees and migrants, and UAC and youth in this case, the subjects of policies, have to deal with the direct effects of these disconnected and

disparate policies on them. UAC and youth's stay in Egypt is merely a transit for them, a temporary situation for the GoE and NGOs, and a chance for the EU to contain further migration to its land.

Although the GoE is ambivalent towards refugees and migrants; its policies and practices do not foster a welcoming and inclusive environment; and it does not bear the burden of social protection or even RSD and census, it allows refugees and migrants to enter and stay. Besides gaining international credibility and praise (see EuroMed Rights 2019), the GoE benefits from its hosting of refugees and migrants because of the flow of international funds into the country indirectly through IOM, UNHCR, and NGOs (Norman 2017).

The EU cherishes Egypt as a transit country where people can be prevented to move to the other side of the Mediterranean, applying a "transnational projection of power over a population" (Walters 2021, 244). The idea of transit migration allows for the distribution of political responsibility on transnational scales. The designation of a country as transit is itself an exercise of the power of labelling associated with migration governance. Further, transit countries -such as the case of Egypt- often internalize such labelling within policy (Walters 2021).

The thin welcome of refugees is reinforced by the EU agreements with Egypt and other North African states to combat irregular migration to Europe and externalize border controls "to control migratory flows at a distance" (Walters 2021, 243). Ideas of transit migration and migration routes shift the border from a local front-line to several points along the route. The relations resulting in the bordering and governance of these routes are often expressed along the lines of neighbourhood, solidarity, and agreement (Walters 2021). However, the actors participating in such agreements are never of equal power, for example Euro-African Dialogue (Walters 2021), EU-Egypt Partnership Priorities 2017-2020 (EuroMed Rights 2019), and Mediterranean Managed Migration Project (3MP) (Feldman 2011).

Organizations such as IOM reinforce this position designated to Egypt and attempt to strengthen its role in retaining refugees and migrants within its borders. As per one participant, IOM carries out capacity-building activities for different government bodies (e.g. Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Solidarity, NCCM, The National Coordinating Committee for Combating and Preventing Illegal Migration and Trafficking in Persons) to train them on rules governing human mobility, spotting fraudulent documents, protection mechanisms, and countering smuggling and trafficking, in addition to rights of migrant children.

The absence of real 'integration' -or any other 'durable solution'- has dire effects on refugees in Egypt, especially reflected in their inability to obtain work permits and long-term residency permits (they only get a 6-months permit that is very costly and time-consuming to renew, and subjects them to detention if expired or non-existent) (Sharafeldin 2020). It intensifies the temporariness in different aspects of their lives. It also contributes to shaping their governance and assistance by UNHCR and NGOs. One of its effects is the blur between humanitarian and development aid, resulting in a hybrid inconsistent framework with outcomes that can neither be evaluated in terms of sustainability nor emergency relief. The NGO-ized refugee governance and assistance is organized in terms of projects. Assistance is extended to newly-arrived asylum-seekers as well as old refugees who have been in Egypt for tens of years. Also, refugees in Egypt live in urban settings rather than refugee camps or other settings that entail an emergency. Nevertheless, NGO projects are mostly short-term, one or two years, providing assistance that refugees would not be able to sustain. Notwithstanding the advocacy efforts by UNHCR directed towards the mainstreaming of public services to refugees, the design of services delivered by NGOs is short-term with no exit strategies.

As per one participant, "The services are not sustainable at all. Although all NGOs working with UNHCR know that the refugee situation in Egypt is not an emergency situation, it has been the same for years, or tens of years, and is ongoing. They still deal with it as an emergency situation

requiring emergency responses. Actors should look forward to enabling child development by fostering self-sufficiency rather than depending on services without improving resilience."

The lives and realities of UAC and youth in Egypt are structured around and embedded in the messy synthesis created by disconnected and disparate policy domains. These include GoE's policies, its embeddedness in a wider migration apparatus, and the relations and effects between government policies, NGO governance, and EU migration and bordering regimes.

3.2 UAC and Youth's Experiences, Challenges, and Services as Narrated by NGO Workers

This section provides an outlook on the lived experiences of UAC and youth in Egypt as seen and understood by NGO practitioners, highlighting their persistent challenges and available services. Interviews with NGO practitioners as well as direct observations of UAC and youth within the scope of my engagement with them during my work in the field are the sources of data in this section.

Like all refugees in Egypt, UAC and youth are pushed into the urban setting. There are no refugee camps in Egypt. Majority of refugees reside in overpopulated and marginalized neighbourhoods in Greater Cairo. There are particular concentration areas for some communities.

When UAC first arrive to Egypt, they are advised by peers or community members to approach UNHCR which registers and documents refugees and asylum-seekers instead of the GoE. UNHCR liaises with the authorities for the release of detainees. Its partners provide legal support and representation when needed. They provide MHPSS, best interest assessment (BIA), case management, and mentorship. They also provide community-based protection and emergency response. Implementing partners for education assistance provide education grants to all registered refugee students.

Upon registration and receiving their asylum-seeker (yellow) cards, they are referred to case management implementing partners - SCI or Caritas, depending on their age, and assigned specific caseworkers for BIAs and follow-up. They are also referred to Caritas to receive financial assistance (900 EGP/ month). The financial struggles of UAC who live on cash assistance, and unaccompanied youth who receive no assistance at all, are among many challenges they face.

Financial Challenges

UAC receive 900 EGP per month, equivalent to 45 EUR and one-third of the minimum wage in Egypt (2700 EGP[4]). Financial assistance barely covers their rent, leaving them with many unmet needs. UAC usually live with several other peers in rented apartments. Each of them pays their rent share of around 500-600 EGP monthly. Most of them receive food vouchers with which they can buy food items for 400 EGP from certain supermarkets. Neither the 900 EGP covers their basic necessities, nor the 400 EGP covers their food needs.

UAC are fully dependent on financial assistance. If the assistance gets delayed for a month, they struggle with paying the rent and can even end up evicted for failing to pay. If they live with older flatmates, they can be subjected to exploitation (having to cook and do all the chores in exchange for delaying the rent payment). The insufficient financial assistance results in various other protection and health problem. One of which is hindering their attempts to manage their budget properly. Another is contributing to their over-crowdedness within flats and residence in unsafe neighbourhoods.

Protection Threats

[4] "Sisi directs to raise minimum wage to 2,700, approves 2 periodic bonuses at cost of LE8B". *Egypt Today*. January 2022. https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/3/112016/Sisi-directs-to-raise-minimum-wage-to-2-700-approves

Refugees and migrants in general face xenophobia in Egypt. Africans, in particular, are highly racialized. Given that UAC mainly come from the Horn of Africa and look different from Egyptians, they are subjected to 'xeno-racism' (Fekete 2018), harassment, and bullying. Some participants asserted that Syrian refugees in Egypt do not face racism or xenophobia as compared to Africans because of similarities in appearances, culture, and language.

The overpopulation and undereducation of host community members residing in UAC's concentration areas contribute to limited acceptance by their neighbours. Further, their concentration in large groups in certain neighbourhoods makes them easily noticeable and tracked by bullies and thieves. Some UAC are stalked by the smugglers who brought them to Egypt. They ask them for the remaining transporting fees and threaten to hurt them or their families back home if they do not pay. In some cases, they exploit the children in exchange for dropping their debts. UAC and youth are also often mobilized to join gangs or engage in illegal activities and threatened if they are reluctant to do so. In addition, young unaccompanied girls are more prone than boys to facing SGBV and sexual exploitation if they move houses or during domestic work that many of them do.

The protection threats surrounding UAC can result in crippling fear. Not only that many of them express having nightmares or trouble sleeping, but also some become too scared to leave their houses. This exacerbates their negative thoughts and negative coping mechanisms. Psycho-social Services and Training Institute in Cairo (PSTIC), provides MHPSS in cooperation with Terre Des Hommes. It usually handles cases of protection concerns and provides housing relocation and assistance only if there is a persistent threat related to the area of residence. CARE International provides legal case management and housing support for SGBV survivors who fulfil certain criteria. UAC are not eligible for housing support in cases of harassment or theft by random people on the street. They merely get verbal advice from caseworkers such as to avoid walking alone or at night, to change routes, to divide money in different places, etc.

Health Issues

Financial limitations contribute to some UAC's malnourishment and therefore conditions such as anaemia. The lack of space in their houses accelerates the spread of contagious -and sometimes deadly- diseases such as TB. In addition, some UAC have chronic diseases while many others have physical injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder from persecution in the home country, difficulties in their journeys to Egypt, or protection incidents in Egypt.

PSTIC offers MHPSS services and MSF provides physical and mental health services for survivors of violence. Caritas handles chronic diseases. SCI handles secondary healthcare and high-risk cases. In addition, refugees in Egypt have been mainstreamed into the public health system in 2017, in primary healthcare, family planning, and vaccination campaigns.

However, UAC often lack information about the existing health services. They get fatigued in very long waiting queues in Caritas and end up leaving. They do not follow up with specific doctors thus in every visit they start over by explaining their cases. They are ill-treated and neglected when they approach public hospitals and health units. UAC who do not speak Arabic find communication impossible with doctors. Although PSTIC sometimes offers accompaniment to public hospitals, this service is not always accessible, and language remains a huge barrier to accessing healthcare.

Language Barrier

The percentage of newly arrived UAC who do not speak Arabic varies from year to year. The language barrier hinders some UAC from expressing themselves and dealing with others. It adds to their isolation and reluctance to go out as they will not be able to communicate with people on the streets. Language forms a barrier to the already restrictive and exploitative job market, as well as to the limited and irrelevant education opportunities. Language classes offered by NGOs

such as CRS, Saint Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS), and SCI target very small numbers. The courses are too short to match the number of hours required to learn a language. Further, following their migration aspirations, those who join prefer enrolling in English classes instead of Arabic.

Education

The GoE grants access to the public education system to refugees from certain nationalities and not others. However, the absence of a legal guardian hinders all UAC's enrolment attempts in public schools regardless of nationality since the educational administrations require the presence of a legal guardian for registration. In addition, public schools are already overloaded with extremely high student-teacher ratios and low quality of education. UAC who wish to resume formal education find refugee community schools (RCSs) their only option.

RCSs are initiatives run by Sudanese community leaders in Cairo. They are supported by parents who wish to preserve their Sudanese culture and avoid assimilation through teaching their children their home country's curriculum and obtaining the Sudanese certificates. However, they operate without legal registration and thus without supervision. Almost all RCSs suffer from financial difficulties, infrastructural issues, safety hazards, congestion, low quality of education, and in some cases harassment and discrimination from Egyptian neighbours.

Most UAC have been out of school for at least one year. Some have never attended formal schooling and have only attended 'khalwa' (Quran school). Their language barriers and aforementioned challenges make their re-enrolment and commitment to formal education a difficult task. Further, the non-Sudanese who enroll in Sudanese RCSs find themselves facing a "third layer of exclusion" as phrased by one of the participants; they are Eritreans, Ethiopians, or Somalis enrolled in Sudanese schools in Egypt. Another participant expresses that the education assistance provided for UAC with different needs was no different from that provided to children who have caregivers, speak Arabic, and have access to the public education system. Also, many

UAC viewed Egypt as a transitional country and thus prioritized livelihood opportunities to save up money for traveling Therefore, UAC represented 90% of school dropouts calculated by CRS in 2017-2018.

2019 marked the start of the implementation of an education and protection assistance project for UASC.[5] The project has special interventions for UAC such as accelerated education programs (AEPs) that provide language classes and curriculum bridging programs for UAC to be ready for re-enrolment in school. Besides payment of their school fees, this project disburses monthly stipends to cover unaccompanied students' education expenses. It also provides them with monthly mentorship meetings in which students follow up with the same caseworker throughout the academic year. This is besides peer support groups and psychosocial support activities.

This year, one of the students in this project was the first UAC to enrol in higher education in Egypt upon completing secondary education. As per one participant, this was not seen on the horizon. Before this project, it was completely dull, and this pathway was non-existent. Also, enrolment and retention rates have increased over the years since 2019.

However, gaps and shortcomings remain. School enrolment is only limited to RCSs. The project targets a very limited number of UAC. Many UAC who never had formal education do not fit the criteria of participation in the project. In addition, students who 'age out' find themselves deprived of this assistance in the following academic year. Upon the completion of secondary education (in very limited cases), students do not know what steps to take next. Higher education scholarships cover a very limited number of students with very high requirements and needed documents which the students have left behind at home. Vocational training also targets very

[5] Not all projects for refugee UAC are funded directly by UNHCR. There are other humanitarian and development donors that fund many projects.

minimal numbers, and work permits are not granted, leaving most students without an open pathway after school.

Coming of Age with No Rite of Passage

UAC in Egypt experience a sudden transition upon their coming of age without any preparation or pre-apprehension. There is no transitional period between the abrupt line separating childhood and adulthood. Once they 'age out', UAC find themselves without any financial assistance, affordable education opportunities, dignified work opportunities, or at least guidance towards clear future pathways. This contributes to feelings of depression and wanting to leave because there is nothing for them in Egypt.

Transitions, including coming of age, can be disturbing or even dangerous to the lives of individuals or groups. They are sometimes referred to as 'life crises'. Arnold van Gennep ([1960] 2019) calls the ceremonies that take place in certain societies in accompaniment to life crises 'rites of passage'. Rites of passage consist of three main stages: separation, transition, and incorporation. As per the English translators, 'passage' could more accurately be translated into 'transition'. Rites of passage mitigate this disturbance.

While rites of passage serve to pave the way from one stage of life to the other to ease the conflict that might arise from abrupt change, UAC experience this abrupt change with no transitional period. Not only that their status changes from child to adult, also perceptions about them change from the extreme end of a vulnerable victim requiring protection and assistance to a responsible agentive self-sufficient adult.

Participants expressed their disappointment at how assistance is limited to children, 'surprising' them with its cut upon turning 18. They become ineligible for financial assistance. Their case management stops. Their holistic educational assistance stops unless they enrolled in

school at 17 and turned 18 during the academic year. However, when their financial assistance stops, they become more likely to drop out of school to work for a living. In many cases, aged-out youth are denied the possibility of resettlement.

As refugees in Egypt do not have work permits, the type of jobs unaccompanied youth find available are very hectic. They take the bare minimum in exchange for at least 12 hours of physical labour with no guarantee of salaries and rights. This often results in subjecting unaccompanied youth to very exploitative circumstances.

Several participants explain the absence of proper guidance from NGOs for 17-year-old UAC. The only advice they receive from NGOs is to register for vocational training or apply for a livelihood opportunity that provides linkage to a private employer. These services of course do not have the capacity to include everyone. Those who know Arabic and a local language and are lucky enough might be hired as interpreters in NGOs. Their roles and responsibilities are limited to translation and interpretation without chances to grow professionally. Although most NGOs are managed by Global North 'expats' that have little awareness of the context in Egypt as well as of refugee communities, only two NGOs hire refugees in positions other than interpreters.

The various projects targeting UAC reflect donor's interests in serving a certain category deemed vulnerable. This categorization creates an artificial stage called 'ageing-out' that ignores the problematization of the 'givenness of age' (Bhabha 2019). It divides youth into deserving children and undeserving adults, although the first might be born just a day later than the latter. This rigid distinction between childhood and adulthood resembles the rigid lines between 'refugee' and 'migrant' that entails deservingness and undeservingness, although in reality this distinction is always blurred.

3.3 Conclusion

The described situation entails not only a pluralization of the modern governance (Gordon 1991), but also a scatter and disconnection of the multiplicity of actors and policy domains. The disparate interests and policy directions for each of the actors (GoE, NGOs, donors, EU) constricts the others and limits their extent of practicing their policy directions. However, there remains a constant provocation and negotiation, rather than an explicit confrontation (Burchell 1991), among these actors that share a scattered responsibility of governance (or ambivalence to govern), and between the synthesis they create and the choices, coping mechanisms, and strategies of UAC and youth.

Chapter Four: Navigating the Migration Apparatus

UAC and youth navigate the disconnected and disparate policy domains, trying to cope with their effects through an interplay between agency and vulnerability. They negotiate their belonging through making their own communities, benefitting from the existing services temporarily, and trying to find their ways out. This chapter tells NGO workers' accounts of UAC and youth's coping mechanisms and migration strategies, and their attempts to provide meaningful assistance and help youth develop positive coping mechanisms and stay safe.

4.1 Negotiations and Coping Mechanisms

UAC and youth face a complex set of interrelated challenges that exacerbate their hardships associated with displacement. Many structural barriers hamper their incorporation into the host community which they, therefore, deem a transit. UAC and youth consciously and unconsciously develop coping mechanisms in the face of these hardships and precarious situations.

Withdrawal and isolation are very common negative coping mechanisms among UAC and youth. Because of the fear of the constant protection threats, and difficulty in communication due to the language barrier, some make a choice to avoid participation. They sometimes stop going to NGOs, to school, or out of the house at all. One participant mentions that when she'd follow up why they stopped going to school, they would say that they have a lot on their minds.

The outbreak of COVID-19 and NGOs' work from home greatly affected UAC. UAC find in NGOs safe spaces where they hang out and meet their peers, seek advice, and reach out for assistance. One participant mentions that SCI serves as this safe space for UAC which they run to when they have a problem. The new arrivals also approach UNHCR for registration. Lockdown and remote work not only delayed the registration and assistance of many newly arrived

UAC, but also shut down the offices in which they confide and meet friends. This exacerbated feelings of isolation and loss among many.

COVID-19 had dire financial effects on UAC and youth. Those who worked were mostly fired and those who relied on financial assistance had to tolerate its delays. In addition, the overburden on health entities resulted in a lack of proper access to healthcare and regular follow-up which coincided with increased cases of TB and different non-COVID-related health issues among UAC and youth. One participant states that two years ago, the negative coping mechanisms included dropping out of education, joining gangs, irregular migration, or isolation. "It's either fight or flight or freeze" she says. After COVID, her team encountered more reports of suicidal attempts and drug use.

On the other side of isolation and withdrawal comes networking and connecting. UAC and youth find refuge in relationships with peers and community members. To mitigate feelings of exclusion and marginalization, UAC and youth tend to integrate within the communities of their same ethnicities or countries of origin in Egypt.

Influenced by their categorization and the assistance associated with it, UAC identify themselves as 'underage'. They identify with each other because -notwithstanding their particularities- they share very similar circumstances. They know each other from their home countries, their journeys to Egypt, SCI, schools, activities arranged by NGOs, areas of residence, and flats. They live together, stick to each other, and support each other in their hardships. Some examples demonstrating the strong ties among UAC and youth that I have encountered include renting football fields and organizing tournaments with each other; throwing farewell parties to the few of them who were to be resettled; celebrating local holidays together; taking each other to the hospital when they got sick; accompanying each other to NGOs; running errands with friends

who do not speak Arabic or have physical disabilities; and taking care of younger children and making sure they drop them home safely after classes.

As per one participant, each UAC has around five-six friends in different areas. When they face a problem related to their area of residence, they go stay with one of their friends in a different area for a few days until things calm down. Similarly, when they face a financial difficulty and are not able to pay the rent, they switch houses monthly moving from one friend's place to another's to avoid paying rent.

They make a sub-community isolated from the host community to feel safer. Their sub-community relates to the bigger community of their ethnicity or country of origin which also supports them in various ways. One participant who works on community-based protection emphasizes how community-based organizations and community members identify vulnerable people and help them out in many ways including guidance, referral or accompaniment to NGOs, providing food and medications, and taking in those sick until they recover.

The strong ties between UAC and youth are not free of peer pressure. One participant explains how peer pressure prompts UAC and youth to take impulsive decisions. These include agreeing to work for strangers in remote areas, doing drugs, or embarking on dangerous migration journeys. Another participant mentions how UAC and youth try to surround themselves with peers who are active, who work or go to school, in order to motivate themselves to do the same. They want to rid themselves of the potential negative impact of being around peers who adopt negative coping mechanisms.

NGOs attempt to help UAC develop positive coping mechanisms. Case management provides UAC with caseworkers whom they can confide in and talk to about their problems and seek their advice and support. Caseworkers encourage students to enrol in education activities to spend their time meaningfully and network with others. MHPSS activities aim to provide safe

spaces for UAC to discuss their problems and how to address them. They work on life skills and communication skills, aiming to have the sustainable impact of building resilience. UAC can also be referred to psychologists or psychiatrists when required.

As per one participant, only in the past couple of years that there has been a mainstreaming of safeguarding and MHPSS activities in education services to tackle the psychological impact of exclusion on unaccompanied students. Especially after COVID-19 when UAC's coping mechanisms became more prone to violence, isolation, and migration, educational services integrated activities that help identify triggers and stressors, how to deal with them, and how to coexist with different communities. No service should be provided without identifying its potential risks and mitigation measures. Before that, according to another participant, school still provided UAC with a space to interact with people and make friends. It gave them the chance to have a normal school life where they can learn, rebel against teachers, have inside jokes, etc.

Building on the importance of supportive networks, PSTIC's operations attempt to ensure stable housing and social support through involving the community in its assistance plans for UAC and youth. Relying on staff from diverse refugee and migrant communities and ethnicities, it reaches out to community members and understands their problems and backgrounds, as one participant put it. He asserts that if the community did not help, the UAC's situation will relapse.

When the coping mechanisms with the messiness and disconnection of the governance apparatus and the indefinite temporariness it results in cease, UAC and youth make dangerous decisions to practice their otherwise restricted mobility.

4.2 Migration Strategies to Escape Indefinite Temporariness

As highlighted in Chapter Three, bordering regimes are ways of governing whose interactions with other policy domains and subjects shape the apparatus. They hugely affect GoE's

internal policies, NGO governance, and the lives and trajectories of the governed – UAC and youth. Bordering regimes reproduce the existing marginalization which UAC and youth strive to escape when they attempt migrating from Egypt. As tools of policing and surveillance, borders, too, marginalize its potential crossers based on race, class, and dispossession (Rajaram 2021). UAC and youth employ strategies to navigate the restrictive apparatus that close pathways for safe migration.

NGO workers emphasize that the non-existence of durable solutions or future pathways for UAC and youth in Egypt leave them with no choices other than migration. UAC anxiously wait for their RSD results, aiming to receive the blue cards as their attainment of the refugee status is the first step in the direction of possible resettlement. They remain in waithood and live on hopes of resettlement. While the number of persons resettled annually was already less than 1%, most countries dramatically reduced their quotas after COVID. To flee this state of indefinite temporariness, they search for alternatives, even if these alternatives might mean putting their lives in danger.

UAC and youth become aware of available migration options through various channels. These include smugglers (mostly Egyptians and Sudanese working together) who roam around their areas of residence, transnational connections with family and friends abroad, and peers in Egypt. One participant notes that there are told and untold stories about irregular migration. UAC and youth know about the success stories where people reach Europe. They put high hopes on irregular migration. Even the sad stories where people do not make it does not matter so much because they are living a difficult life in Egypt. "They prefer risking their lives in the sea to staying in Egypt." another participant presumes.

One participant remarks that the grass is always greener on the other side. Once in Egypt, UAC and youth hear from each other that other governments, at least in Europe, are more

prepared to handle them. They convince each other to irregularly migrate. They make decisions regarding migration on their own, without informing family at home or relatives if any to avoid their refusal. Only when they reach Alexandria that they inform their family they're on their way to Libya to migrate from there. The most common migration route (so far) is that in which migrants go from Cairo to Alexandria then from Alexandria to Salloum (a city bordering Libya) then cross the border to Libya. From there, they take a boat across the Mediterranean.

As Abel and Bhabha (2019) explain, unsafe migration includes instances where adolescents depend on exploitative mediators who abuse the need for migration to extract labour or other types of services from adolescents. According to one of the participants, smugglers convince youth to work for six months to earn money to afford the journey. He remarks that the number of UAC and youth who attempt migration is huge. Similarly, one participant remarks the increase in reported cases of attempted migration, and in UAC's increased articulation of their decisions to migrate after COVID. In addition, although he asserts that it is incidental and is still not confirmed by research from IOM, preliminary data suggests that there is a greater prevalence of irregular migration, migrant trafficking and smuggling due to COVID-19 and increased border restrictions.

He explains that many crossings reach relatively safely. However, there are things that happen that make this risky, especially for children. First, there are a lot of pushbacks from Frontex (not officially acknowledged by the Italian or Greek governments). They tend to push migrants back before they touch European soil, or they notify Libyan soldiers to take care of the situation. There is no protection of migrants in Libya regardless of their being asylum seekers, UAC, or victims of trafficking. "Detention conditions in Libya… sure you've seen the news. Maybe the boats don't sink as often, but having your boat sent back to Tripoli is terrible." he continues.

One participant points out that some UAC and youth get stuck in Libya then decide to be smuggled back to Egypt or Sudan. Upon his conversations with them, he understood that the

situation in Libya is difficult. When they first reached Libya they got detained. They were asked to pay 500 USD for smugglers to be released. "Luckier people get caught by the Egyptian guards in Salloum then from Salloum's detention they reach out to PSTIC, StARS, or UNHCR for legal support and advocacy for release. Yesterday there were nine cases of refugees detained in Salloum." According to UNICEF in 2017, UAC make up 14,000 of the estimated 400,000 migrants stranded in Libya. Amnesty International further reports in 2018 the existence of 33 active detention centres in Libya with over 7,000 migrants, many of whom are children (Abel and Bhabha 2019).

4.3 Conclusion

UAC and youth seek alternatives to the restrictive migration framework, bordering regimes, and irrelevant durable solutions. They navigate the available options and routes. They engage with different unrelated actors in the migration apparatus on their journeys. These include NGOs that serve as instruments of governance, whose 'practical logic' (Krause 2014) entails mediating between UAC's needs, donor interests, determination to reach the quantitative project targets and goals to attain more funding, and government restrictions and limitations. They include border control actors such as Frontex and Egyptian and Libyan guards mobilized to protect the European soil from alien encroachment. They include smugglers who take advantage of the restrictive regime to create a profitable migration industry. They also include detention centres, surveillance technologies, policies, and power relations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The thesis aimed to explain how the governance and assistance landscape or apparatus in Egypt relate to UAC and youth's migration strategies. In doing so, it did not focus on one aspect of the apparatus while disregarding others. Following the idea of related (disconnected) actors (Feldman 2011; 2012), this study did not focus on one aspect shaping the trajectories of UAC and youth, but on different actors, policies that can be described as 'actants' (Shore and Wright 2011), and processes that produce the described messy and disconnected domains that make up the apparatus. These include NGOs, GoE policies, EU bordering regimes, the migration industry, and of course, experiences, strategies, coping mechanisms, and navigations of UAC and youth of the apparatus resulting from the relations of these actors and processes. Anthropology of policy served as an important lens to the study in the sense that it emphasizes that social reality cannot be understood when looking at one aspect while leaving out others, but rather by looking at complex engagements and interactions of not only the governing but also the governed.

The GoE demonstrates a thin welcome of refugees to gain international credibility and be labelled 'the Global [*Combat*[6]] for Migration Champion' (IOM 2021, 8). In practice, its policies are indifferent and neglectful, merely serving the purpose of containing refugees and migrants from further mobility toward the EU. The EU, in turn, reinforces pressures to maintain this containment, resulting in the trapping of UAC and youth in a state of indefinite temporariness. This fragmentation and disparity, along with donors' interests and policy directions, guide and constrict how NGOs govern and assist UAC and (neglect) youth.

NGO workers are not disinterested actors that fund the relief of 'distant suffering' (Krause 2014). They are driven by their conviction of 'doing good' (Fisher 1997). They operate, however, according to the requirements and interests of distant donors and eventually become too immersed

[6] Originally 'compact'.

to critically see beyond their doxa (Krause 2014). NGO workers' gaze is not only restricted by how their field entails a certain shared logic and way of seeing. It is also restricted by the structural barriers facing refugees, and their exacerbation for UAC and youth. GoE's policies does not give much space for NGO workers to think and operate beyond the existing barriers.

The relationship between the GoE, UNHCR, and NGOs is one of negotiations rather than confrontation. NGO workers remain reflexive, to some extent, of the shortcomings of their services, the absence of durability of most of them, and the state's ambivalence which hinders cooperation for durable incorporation of UAC and youth in the host community. NGO workers' disappointments and frustrations arise from the structural barriers that impede UAC and youth's incorporation or mobility. Within the very limited scope of operation restricted by funding interests and GoE's reluctance toward incorporation, NGOs try to negotiate the positions of UAC -leaving behind youth- in the host country. They attempt to help with developing positive coping mechanisms and improved education and skills, even if still thinly designed and not inclusive of everyone.

UNHCR attempts to guide advocacy efforts towards the inclusion of refugees in public services. However, the efforts to include refugees entail exclusion of other deserving migrants that do not necessarily qualify for the refugee status. Also, UNHCR and NGOs are overburdened by what should be the responsibility of the state. NGOs are thus a part of the migration apparatus (Feldman 2011;2012), taking part in a 'multiple -chaotic- regime of governmentality' (Gordon 1991) with disconnected and disparate policy domains that restrict each other.

UNHCR and NGOs, GoE, and the EU each have disparate policy directions. The interactions of these disparate policy domains limit each of these actors' capacity to fully put their policy into practice. The GoE does not take responsibility of refugees and migrants yet keeps them in. UNHCR and NGOs do not attain their desired 'durable solutions' because Egypt does not

welcome integration, resettlement countries do not want more people, and repatriation is dangerous for almost all UAC and youth. The EU contains migrants somewhere else yet does not help create conditions that would make them stay in Egypt. UAC and youth, trapped in this state of limbo created by the messiness and disconnection of actants, adopt different coping mechanisms to negotiate their stay in Egypt. These range from withdrawal to making a supportive network of their own. When these coping mechanisms with a situation of indefinite temporariness and indefinite immobility cease, they take life-threatening decisions to break free. Their only way to navigate the apparatus is through irregular migration.

UAC and youth's coping mechanisms demonstrate an interplay of vulnerability and agency. They make decisions and employ strategies to practice their mobility. However, they also face many hazards that include exploitation, trafficking, and not surviving the journey across the Mediterranean.

Producing and reproducing a landscape so suffocating to children and youth that they put their lives in danger to escape it requires a pause from all the disparate actors. It might require a revised migration governance regime, deconstructed binaries of deservingness and undeservingness, more regular and safe mobility pathways, or even a global world order free of inequality, dependency, and underdevelopment. However, in this conclusion, I attempt to give realistic recommendations that also work within the limitations of the existing state of things.

To begin with, UNHCR and NGOs -and all their workers in different job levels- should be fully and explicitly aware of the limitations of the durable solutions that theoretically guide their projects. They should be aware of the protracted situations which UAC and youth are in and accordingly avoid short-term thinking that invokes 'crisis' and emergency logic. Instead, efforts should be guided towards finding pathways of meaningful incorporation of UAC and youth in Egypt.

This requires magnified coordinated and joint awareness-raising efforts on UAC and youth in Egypt among government bodies such as the Ministry of Social Solidarity and NCCM. It also requires advocacy efforts toward the enforcement of laws that extend child protection and CRC principles to all children in Egypt, with special attention and tailored services for UAC. The inclusion of UAC and youth -regardless of nationality, minority status, or refugee status- in all public services should be advocated for. UAC and youth should be able to enroll in the public education system free of charge, both in basic and secondary education and in higher education. They should also be able to obtain work permits, and longer residence permits that would ease the precarity of their situation.

Since public services in Egypt are stretched thin for everyone, calls for inclusion should be coupled with calls for funding directed towards capacity building and renovations of services that would benefit Egyptian and non-Egyptian children alike. These interventions should be carried out by host and migrant community members together, who understand their needs and backgrounds better than foreign experts alien to the context and to the people's lived experiences.

Crucial recommendations should be directed to UNHCR and NGOs regarding enhanced project design and implementation, or maybe a break away from 'the good project' logic altogether (Krause 2014). Yet this requires a study on its own.

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